DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 103 081 JC 750 228

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TITLE Operation Enable: Delivery of Services to the New Client.
PUB DATE 14 Apr 75
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (55th, Seattle, Washington, April 13-16, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Community Services; Correctional Education; Correctional Rehabilitation; Educational Objectives; Educational Television; *Interinstitutional Cooperation; *Junior Colleges; Military Personnel; *Off Campus Facilities; *Outreach Programs; Police; Prisoners; Proprietary Schools; Recidivism
IDENTIFIERS *Hagerstown Junior College; Maryland; Non-Traditional Students

ABSTRACT

Hagerstown Community College (HCC) in Maryland has developed a number of new programs to serve clientele in the surrounding area who in most cases cannot or would not attend classes on the main campus. One such client group is the inmate population at two State prisons in the area. Programs for the inmates are selected on the basis of available associate degree job placement opportunities or ease of transfer. Evaluation of the program, based on approximately 200 participants, produces guarded optimism. The most notable finding is the positive impact of the program on the tendency of the prisoners to become recidivists. An Administration of Justice curriculum has been established at three satellite centers to serve officers from the five law enforcement jurisdictions in the HCC area. HCC is also involved in a unique relationship with a local proprietary business college. The proprietary school has chjcabstlinesbrowardcommunitycollegebccinaachjcabstlineslines contracted HCC to provide instructional services in the areas of arts, sciences, and social sciences. A satellite center which as of Spring, 1975, had 161 enrollees is located at Fort Richie, a local military installation. HCC also participates in the Maryland College of the Air television network as a means of serving another population of non-traditional learners. The two objectives HCC hopes to reach through these programs are access and efficiency. (Author/AH)

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Operation Enable:
Delivery of Services to the New Client

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Introduction

Across our nation today, educators are raising a question. "What does the name community college stand for?"[1] The question seems incongruous to some in the field because the answer appears obvious. The institution is the "open-door", "the peoples' college", American democracy at work.

The fact is, however, that the question is being dismissed too quickly. Perhaps, the name "community", which is so flippantly used, has yet to be earned. Does the open door guarantee access or does it revolve to perpetuate inequality? Does the "peoples' college" signify egalitarianism or does it "cool out" the aspirations of the upwardly mobile? Is democracy or the status quo at work in today's community college?

There is no universally accurate answer available for these questions. However, they are not unanswerable. A productive strategy is to analyze how one community college has defined and realized its mission. While a single case study could not pretend universality, replication of the technique can produce valid generalizations. The purpose of this presentation, then, is to analyze how one institution has performed the role of community catalyst.

Same Goal - New Mission

Hagerstown Junior College in Hagerstown, Maryland has been in existence for twenty-nine years. Throughout its history, the college has had a consistent goal--to serve as a community resource for the residents of its' service area. For a time the goal was interpreted to mean providing the first two years of baccalaureate credit preparatory for transfer to a senior institution.

With the enrollment explosion of the 1960's the interpretation changed. New clients previously not considered "college material" emerged. They looked for service from the self-professed community catalyst.

The college accepted the challenge and adopted new strategies for instruction. The heterogeneous composition of the new clientele required learning designs which were flexible, individually paced, and adaptable to a variety of cognitive styles. Hagerstown Junior College settled upon modularized, audio-tutorial, contractual learning.[2] The results were exciting. Failure rates dropped. Retention rates increased. Student achievement (as measured by statistical models), grade point averages, and program completions, blossomed. When the college was re-accredited in May, 1974, the Middle States team said, "The college has shown admirable energy, initiative, and sensitivity to the needs of the Community in its rapid expansion of . . . programs."

Has the college fully realized its mission? United States Deputy Commissioner of Education William Pierce provides an interesting perspective on the question: "it's my perception that at least as much as the secondary schools, (community colleges) have become wall bound. You don't break out and take your programs to your people where they are--in stores, in factories, in secondary, elementary, and private schools. You demand they come to you. Too many can't or won't . . ."[3] If a college cannot meet Pierce's challenge it cannot consider itself responsive to the new client.

Hagerstown Junior College was not satisfied to develop, test, and perfect an accountable system of instruction just to have it remain campus bound. As the new clientele emerged, groups became visible which could not attend classes on campus. Therefore, strategies were adopted to deliver service <u>where</u> the client was; <u>at times</u> when the service would be most

beneficial. Some of the models are worthy of analysis.

New Delivery Systems

Application of the "community-as-campus" concept is shaped by the idiosyncratic nature of the host community. The five models presented here emerge from "what is" in Washington County, Maryland.

Washington County is the site of two State prisons. The Maryland Correctional Institute and the Maryland Correctional Training Center house approximately 2,000 inmates. These institutions are charged under State statute with custody and rehabilitation. They may conduct secondary education programs but not post-secondary ones. In 1969, a task force composed of college and institutional personnel determined that some of the inmates could benefit from post-secondary instruction. The college stepped in.

The goal of the inmate program is to screen, counsel, and instruct selected inmates so that upon parole they may re-enter society either with a marketable skill or as viable transfer students. Instructional strategies validated on campus have been applied in the correctional milieu. Programs are selected on the basis of available associate degree job placement or ease of transfer. Close coordination between correctional institution and college is maintained by a council composed of classification and educational personnel from the institution and a counselor and an administrator from the college. To date, approximately 200 inmates have progressed through the program.

Evaluation of the program produces guarded optimism. Dismissal rates have been quite low. Grade point averages have been higher than those of on-campus students. The impact of the program on recedivism has been noticeable. The State Department of Corrections reports that in three cases out of four the paroled felon will return to prison. In the case of the college inmate program,

the return ratio is one case in two. Efforts continue to reduce recidivism and to increase inmate achievement. As long as the program continues to be perceived as necessary by a segment within the college service area, it will continue.

Washington County contains five law enforcement jurisdictions. The State Police have a barracks, the County Sheriff serves the area, the major municipality, Hagerstown, has a police force, Fort Ritchie, a military base in the County, has a military police company, and the two prisons have a substantial officer force. Understandably, Hagerstown Junior College has an Administration of Justice curriculum. On-campus scheduling is designed to assist the officer who works a variety of shifts. Yet, all of the needs cannot be met by on-campus programming. Therefore, the college has established three satellite centers to ease client access. Courses are offered at the Hagerstown City Police Headquarters, at the Maryland Correctional Training Center, and on post at Fort Ritchie. An officer from any jurisdiction may take courses at any of the centers. Schedule times and course selection are designed to provide maximum utility for the officer-student.

Evaluation of the multi-center approach reveals that enrollment has increased since the centers have been established. Interviews with Administration of Justice students attending the satellite centers suggest that the centers were a primary determinant in the student's decision to enter the program. The centers are a transitory phenomenon; eventually the pool of officers demanding service will be replaced with a trained cadre. Until then, the centers will continue to function.

Washington County has sufficient population to support two institutions providing post-secondary education. The proprietary Hagerstown Business College

specializes in training secretaries in the medical, legal, accountancy, and general fields. Bender and Shoemaker suggest that the proprietary school is a threat to the community college.[4] But, their generalization is not universally valid. Hagerstown Junior College and Hagerstown Business College have entered into a synergetic relationship enabling each to more efficiently fulfill its mission.

The Hagerstown Business College was examined for State accreditation in May of 1974. The accrediting team questioned the viability of the general education component of the school's programs. The director of the institution contacted the Junior College and negotiated a contract for the delivery of instructional services in the areas of arts, sciences, and social sciences. Hagerstown Junior College restructured course materials to meet the objectives established by the Business College. Also, students from the Business College were given access to the learning centers and library at the college. For the past year, the program has functioned efficiently.

Although superficial examination might raise a question regarding the appropriateness of such cooperative programming, further analysis reveals its essential logic. For Hagerstown Junior College, cost factors involved in tooling up competitive programs are prohibitive. The success of such programs would be questionable given the quality of career instruction provided by the Business College. Therefore, service to the community dictates cooperation rather than counter-productive competition.

Fort Ritchie is a comprehensive military installation located within the service area of the college. Its peculiar needs impact on the philosophy of the college. The interaction produces non-traditional programming for the institution which results in a satisfied client.

Military personnel from the base are welcome to make the thirty-five

mile round trip to the college campus for classes. Furthermore, a selected group of soldiers are assigned to the college. They comprise the PREP program. Distance and the class scheduling, however, militate against ease of access.

Some five years ago, Fort Ritchie became a satellite center. Students may now receive an associate degree from Hagerstown Junior College without ever visiting the parent campus. The assistant director of the Education Center at the fort serves as college coordinator. He surveys the population, develops schedules with the college administration, conducts registration and book distribution, and acts as on-site trouble shooter. The system functions smoothly despite the geographic separation.

During the Spring 1975 semester, the Fort Ritchie Center has one hundred sixty-one students enrolled in seven courses. Interviews with the students reveal that less than twenty percent would be enrolled were the courses not held on post. In these days of limited growth, no college can afford to disregard so large a market. Nor can it afford to alienate so obvious a constituency. The marriage of philosophy and economics is rewarding.

Not all of the potential students in Washington County desire to follow a traditional learning pattern of classroom or laboratory based instruction. Many of them are self-motivated, self-directed learners. They seek to integrate their needs with college resources. Until recently, no strategy existed to facilitate their desire.

During the Fall 1974 semester, Hagerstown Junior College obtained membership in the Maryland College of the Air television network. The Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting transmits four courses per semester throughout the state. Member colleges implement them and grant credit. Students may register by mail and need to be on campus only twice per semester for examinations. College appointed coordinators are available via telephone at specified times to answer procedural or substantive questions. The courses

apply to associate degree completion.

In its first effort, Hagerstown Junior College enrolled twenty people during the Spring 1975 semester. Thus far there have been no withdrawals. Coordinators indicate that the clients are pleased with course content as well as program procedure. It behooves the college to use whatever medium exists to meet client needs. The payoff is a financially viable institution which is perceived as a community catalyst.

The process of responding to community needs is an unceasing one. Presently, the college is negotiating with the Washington County Board of Education to offer courses in the high schools for interested seniors. Also, the State Drug Abuse Administration has requested that the college serve as training agent for its drug abuse counselor program. Components of the program will be offered at off-campus locations. The list goes on. In short, Hagerstown Junior College makes a concerted effort to identify and respond to service area needs. Location, time, and format are secondary to service as determining variables.

Conclusion

Knoell and McIntyre distinguish between a comprehensive community college and a comprehensive community college education. The emphasis must be placed on student needs not college convenience. "The traditional campus should become just one part of (the) system, complemented by other means . . . neighborhood satellites, storefront operations, mobile units, limited purpose centers . . . and other community facilities in whatever combination provides access in the most efficient manner."[5] Their paradigm describes Hagerstown Junior College.

Two objectives underlie the model described above--access and efficiency. Harlacher has pointed out "For too long a period our institutions have really been institution-based or even faculty-based. I think what we are saying now

is that we're going to relate directly to the community, and our programming will be determined on the basis of community needs."[6] Before the service area resident can become "the new client," access must exist. Only by beginning with the community can an institution hope to become open and responsive to those who need service.

The second objective, efficiency, demands maximum impact from available resources. Emphasis on palatial facilities in a single location is doubly wasteful. It disregards the dynamic of changing community needs by demanding that all services exist in one place. Also, it successfully denies service to those who cannot reach the single location. The Hagerstown model of scattered site programming is truly catalytic in that it speeds up community development by pinpointing areas of need and responding accordingly. Of such stuff is maximum impact made.

Judge Walter J. Gresham penned a lesson for community college educators who seek to render services to the new client in American education.

> "I think, when I read of the
> poet's desire,
>
> That a house by the side of the
> road would be good;
>
> But service is found in its
> tenderest form
>
> When we walk with the crowd in
> the road."[7]

Footnotes

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